

**U.S. Department of Education - EDCAPS
G5-Technical Review Form (New)**

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/15/2019 10:51 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: New Teacher Center (U411A190003)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	10	8
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	23
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	20	18
Adequacy of Resources/Quality of Management Plan		
1. Resources/Management Plan	25	25
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	0
Sub Total	100	74
Total	100	74

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - EIR Expansion - 1: 84.411A

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: New Teacher Center (U411A190003)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The national significance of the proposed project.

(2) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates there is unmet demand for the process, product, strategy, or practice that will enable the applicant to reach the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

Strengths:

The achievement gap between high-income students and those who have financial need, as well as the gap between white students and their minority counterparts, is definitely a nationally significant issue. As the applicant presents, 25% of US students attend large, overcrowded public schools where minority students are the majority. In such schools, 65% of students fail to score on the basic level or above in national achievement tests. This project identifies teachers being employed in large metropolitan schools who are inexperienced and certified as a significant factor in the achievement gap. (pg. 3)

The applicant points out that the achievement gap is not just a metropolitan school issue. It is also present in rural schools where students are more likely to be poor and to be achieving at a lower level than suburban counterparts. The project's significance is more profound as it addresses rural students as well as urban scholars. (pg.3)

Across the nation, there are metropolitan and rural schools which are experiencing achievement gaps compared to suburban counterparts. Because the New Teacher Center (NTC) model has proven to be effective in supporting teachers who work in high poverty/high minority schools to attain higher success rates with such scholars it is likely to be of interest to educators throughout the nation. (pg. 3-4)

Despite significant resources (18 billion dollars annually) being allocated to professional development activities, the applicant asserts that few teachers find current professional development activities to be useful. It is likely that this program which provides high-quality instructional coaching to improve teacher practice and student achievement will be in demand by school districts given that few teachers report other professional development to be as useful. (pg. 5)

Weaknesses:

The applicant indicates that "few teachers" currently report that professional development is useful. The impact of this statement would be enhanced by providing the percentage or number of teachers that expressed this opinion. (pg.5)

On page 6 the applicant reports that a "majority" of coaches report spending a majority of their time on non-coaching activities. The impact of this statement would be enhanced by presenting the percentage or number of coaches who reported as such. (pg. 6)

Overall, the applicant does an acceptable job of presenting the argument that there is a need for more enhanced

professional development supported by instructional coaches but there is not sufficient data presented relative to the number of teachers who report that professional development is useful and the number of coaches who spend a majority of their time on non-coaching activities to make a strong statement that there is a demand for such programming. (pgs. 2-6)

Reader's Score: 8

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(2) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.

Strengths:

Table 1 clearly presents the Goals, Objectives, Performance Measures, and Proximal Outcomes of the Project. Five overarching goals are noted with the stated key components of [REDACTED] (pgs.8-10) It is noted that there is close alignment between stated goals and the objectives which support these goals.

The conceptual framework as diagrammed in Exhibit A (pg.11) is a strength of the application. The conditions to success are clearly defined as [REDACTED] It clearly shows that students are the focus of all activities and initiatives and that teacher effectiveness is enhanced through mentors and coaches working with instructors on effective teaching practices. It is a strength that the framework takes ongoing program evolution into consideration. (pg. 11)

Weaknesses:

Under Goal 1 the supporting objective is [REDACTED] instead, the support is inferred by attendance at a stakeholders meeting. (pg. 8)

Reader's Score: 23

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

1. The Secretary considers the applicant's strategy to scale the proposed project. In determining the applicant's capacity to scale the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the applicant identifies a specific strategy or strategies that address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project will increase efficiency in the use of time, staff, money, or other resources in order to improve results and increase productivity.

Strengths:

The barriers that have previously prevented the applicant from reaching the level of scale that has been proposed in this application include fragmented or underutilized coaching, inefficient local customization, and lack of data to drive programming and dissemination. (pg. 18).

The strategies to address fragmented or underutilized coaching are important and appropriate. [REDACTED]

By recognizing the need to have [REDACTED]

Weaknesses:

The project suggests addressing efficiency in the use of time, staff, money, or other resources by reviewing current resources, schedules, budget, and staffing and making suggestions on how they might be reorganized. Teaching staffs get very nervous when the administration, let alone an external group, suggests changes in the status quo. There is insufficient discussion or acknowledgement in the application of how this potentially disruptive process will be handled in order to minimize political resistance to project implementation, so it is not clear if this project can achieve improved efficiency or productivity. (pg. 26)

Reader's Score: 18

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources/Quality of Management Plan

1. **The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources and the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources and quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**
 - (1) **The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**
 - (2) **The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national or regional level (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) working directly, or through partners, during the grant period.**
 - (3) **The potential for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing program of the agency or organization at the end of Federal funding.**
 - (4) **The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.**

Strengths:

It is a strength that NTC recognizes [REDACTED]

The training opportunities for selected coaches which NTC provides is noteworthy. Training opportunities include [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Training will result in staff who are more qualified to bring the proposed project to scale. (pg. 14-15)

The applicant recognizes [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

NTC has vast experience managing federal grants with quality program implementation and support on time and on budget. It is reasonable to expect that they will utilize successful management structures they have developed at each of the four planned implementation sites. (pg 27)

Management capacity to bring the project to scale is supported by a staff of over 100 full-time staff members, a current operating budget of 30 million dollars, and experience effectively handling federal funds. (pg 34)

Key people involved in the oversight of implementation and management will be Site Leads and Senior Program Managers. Collectively these key personnel will build support, manage, assess and launch various initiatives. The program leads will be at the site and have day to day monitoring of the program. The Program Managers will work with Leads to assure that milestones are met on time and within budget. It is a strength that each site will have key personnel that work specifically with their needs and monitor their progress, giving support as appropriate. (pg. 28-29)

A review of the resumes of key personnel reflects a talented group of educational professionals who have extensive experience in their area of responsibility. As an example, the Project Finance Director, Ellen Kendrick, is a Senior Budget Analyst who has been overseeing existing federal grants since 2015. (pgs. 34-36)

Further fidelity in ensuring that partners are on track to meet the stated goals and objectives is the [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Such a wide array of expertise ensures that resources are being utilized efficiently to address goals and objectives as well as addressing issues which might arise. (pg. 29)

A strength of the application is the presentation of the Management Plan on pages 31 to 33 which provides milestones for the project, a timeline for completion, and the key personnel responsible to monitor progress and ensure completion. Milestones are closely aligned to the Objectives. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

A unique feature of this application is that it is designed to ensure a gradual transition from NTC control to program ownership by the partner sites. This creates a culture and a condition which enhances the likelihood that the program initiatives will continue beyond federal funding support. (pg. 36-37)

The cost per student is a very reasonable \$ [REDACTED] in year one and [REDACTED] in year two. This represents effective utilization of funds if the project goals of accelerated impact upon student achievement and teacher retention are realized. (pg. 38)

Weaknesses:
No weaknesses noted

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in this notice).

(2) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes.

(4) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation

Strengths:

a

Weaknesses:

a

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 05/15/2019 10:51 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/22/2019 11:55 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: New Teacher Center (U411A190003)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	10	0
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	0
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	20	0
Adequacy of Resources/Quality of Management Plan		
1. Resources/Management Plan	25	0
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	14
Sub Total	100	14
Total	100	14

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - EIR Expansion - 1: 84.411A

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: New Teacher Center (U411A190003)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The national significance of the proposed project.

(2) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates there is unmet demand for the process, product, strategy, or practice that will enable the applicant to reach the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

Strengths:

NA

Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(2) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.

Strengths:

NA

Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

1. The Secretary considers the applicant's strategy to scale the proposed project. In determining the applicant's capacity to scale the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the applicant identifies a specific strategy or strategies that address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project will increase efficiency in the use of time, staff, money, or other resources in order to improve results and increase productivity.

Strengths:

NA

Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources/Quality of Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources and the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources and quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

(2) The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national or regional level (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) working directly, or through partners, during the grant period.

(3) The potential for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing program of the agency or organization at the end of Federal funding.

(4) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

Strengths:

NA

Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in this notice).

(2) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes.

(4) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation

Strengths:

The proposal describes a cluster-level randomized controlled trial (RCT) with 50-60 schools randomly assigned to treatment conditions in each of the four school proposed project sites (240 schools total) (p. e65). One primary concern with cluster RCT per What Works Clearinghouse Standards version 4.0 is the potential for joiners, leavers, and stayers. The proposal clearly indicates that joiners will be excluded from the study by collecting baseline teacher and student rosters and only including those on the baseline rosters in impact analyses (p. e67). Based on the design, if implemented as described, the student-level outcomes could meet What Works Clearinghouse Standards without reservation.

The evaluation plan includes a series of coach, teacher, and school surveys, as well as teacher logs and a qualitative study to understand the critical features of implementation (p. e67). Further, all of these data will be triangulated to understand the critical project components (p. e67). Taken together, the information should provide key information for understanding effective strategies and replication.

Student achievement measures are described on page e71. The evaluators will collect student achievement scores on each state's summative assessment (e.g., Florida Standards Assessments) in English language arts, math, and science. The evaluation plan includes different tests across different states, with each test measuring different constructs within each of the achievement domains (e.g., English language arts) and using different approaches for scoring. On page e212, the proposal describes procedures for standardizing scores across states using a z-score approach to ensure accurate aggregation for analysis. At the teacher-level, the evaluators will use the Danielson Framework for Teaching, an established direct observation tool for assessing teacher instructional practices (p. e72). Therefore, the evaluation plan clearly describes how the primary dependent variable will be modeled correctly and that an established, reliable observation tool will be used.

The evaluation plan provides a thorough description of most project components and measures a number of key mediators, including teacher knowledge on student outcomes. Further, the plan describes a series of measurable thresholds of successful implementation on pages e79 and e80. For example, student scores 10% or higher posttest would indicate successful implementation (p. e80). As such, the evaluation plan clearly articulates the mediators that will be examined and indicators of successful implementation.

Fidelity of implementation measures and thresholds of successful implementation are described on page e218-e220. For example, coaches will observe and provide feedback to teachers at least four times each year (p. e219). Therefore, the evaluation plan clearly articulates how the evaluators will ensure that the intervention is implemented with fidelity.

Weaknesses:

The cluster RCT design will randomize schools into treatment and then provide intervention to teachers in the schools randomized into the treatment condition. However, as noted on page e72, "SRI will randomly sample 450 teachers" from the larger cluster randomized trial. In order to meet the Standards without reservations, all of the teachers in the original school-level randomization would need to be included (after assessing attrition). Taking a random sample of teachers from the larger randomized trial is not a new randomized trial. Further, this approach will not allow the mediation analyses to be truly reflective of the cluster randomized trial results, but a subset of teachers and students from the full cluster-level study (p. e73). Therefore, the teacher-level impacts of the study do not appear to meet What Works

Clearinghouse Standards without reservations.

On page e70, the evaluation plan indicates that a standard protocol for the qualitative coding is described. Yet the description on page e210 provides only general procedures and it is unclear what qualitative methodology will be used specifically to analyze the data. As such, it is unclear if the qualitative data will provide valid and reliable performance data.

The proposal only includes one measure of impact on teacher performance and that measure is not implemented with all study teachers. The proposal could be strengthened if a pre-post survey of teacher knowledge or perceptions about pedagogical practices was included to evaluate how the professional development and coaching changes both knowledge and perception of skills. Therefore, it is unclear if, at the teacher-level, the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies.

A power analysis is described on page e72, but needs more detail how it was calculated, particularly addressing the cluster randomization and the variance within and between schools. The power analysis assumes 16% variation within schools and that 60% of within- and 50% of between-school variance is explained by covariates, yet no justification for these parameters is provided. This information is important to clearly articulate key project components.

The proposal indicates that state assessment data will be used as the primary academic achievement measure in the impact study (p. e71) and that prior achievement will be used as a covariate (see power analysis description on page e72). On page e211 is a description of grade-levels and approaches for including additional measures, yet, there is no discussion of how the evaluation plan will address baseline performance (i.e. prior year achievement) for students without prior-year achievement data. Specifically, the plan includes using grade 3 results, but prior achievement data will not be available as students do not complete the assessment until 3rd grade, thus their prior achievement cannot be controlled for in all states (i.e., not all states used a standardized measure prior to grade 3). In order to meet What Works Clearinghouse Standards without Reservations, the grade 3 students will need to be included or else they will count as attrition. Therefore, more clarification is needed to confirm that the analysis plan aligns with the design to meet What Works Clearinghouse Standards without Reservations.

Reader's Score: 14

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 05/22/2019 11:55 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/22/2019 03:46 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: New Teacher Center (U411A190003)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	10	0
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	0
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	20	0
Adequacy of Resources/Quality of Management Plan		
1. Resources/Management Plan	25	0
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	17
Sub Total	100	17
Total	100	17

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - EIR Expansion - 1: 84.411A

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: New Teacher Center (U411A190003)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The national significance of the proposed project.

(2) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates there is unmet demand for the process, product, strategy, or practice that will enable the applicant to reach the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

Strengths:

n/a

Weaknesses:

n/a

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(2) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.

Strengths:

n/a

Weaknesses:

n/a

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

1. The Secretary considers the applicant's strategy to scale the proposed project. In determining the applicant's capacity to scale the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the applicant identifies a specific strategy or strategies that address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project will increase efficiency in the use of time, staff, money, or other resources in order to improve results and increase productivity.

Strengths:

n/a

Weaknesses:

n/a

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources/Quality of Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources and the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources and quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

(2) The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national or regional level (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) working directly, or through partners, during the grant period.

(3) The potential for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing program of the agency or organization at the end of Federal funding.

(4) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

Strengths:

n/a

Weaknesses:

n/a

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project’s effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in this notice).

(2) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes.

(4) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation

Strengths:

The applicant plans to investigate the main impact of the treatment (p 11, 39, 40) using a multisite blocked cluster-randomized trial design with random assignment to treatment and control conditions. The “school randomization will be blocked on site, school grade level (elementary, middle, and high), and poverty level (percent free/reduced price lunch).” There are two main impact variables: improved teaching practices and improved student achievement. Historical student achievement data will be used to establish baseline equivalency across the treatment and control conditions (p 46). Regarding achievement data, the applicant provides details regarding state-level student assessments by grade levels that will be used in the impact analysis (Appendix H2). The applicant provides sufficient detail on a study that can be expected to meet the What Works Clearinghouse Standards for evidence without reservations.

Moreover, given the large multisite design there should not be any power concerns. The applicant specifically allows for a 5% attrition on student outcomes in the power calculation (p 47). The applicant discusses power analysis for both student outcomes and teacher outcomes. Specifically, the applicant describes the statistical models for estimating student and teacher impact (Appendix H3). The net effect of the applicant’s discussion is that the proposed design can be expected to have sufficient power for demonstrating reasonable effects.

Furthermore, the applicant speaks to the potential concerns raised by attrition. The project plans for various data collection efforts that can be used to “minimize overall and differential attrition.” These include “clear communication prior to randomization, financial incentives for all data collection activities, and local program leads who will support the evaluation” (p 42). The applicant makes a reasonable argument that any attrition can be managed so as to not interfere with the impact analyses.

In order to provide guidance about effective strategies for an agency wishing to replicate the IC treatment, the applicant proposes to document implementation activities across multiple sites involving diverse populations. Specifically, the applicant proposes to study such things as the investiture of resources, school leadership development, and quality of coaching. The applicant describes multiple forms of data to be collected including site visits across different districts (p 43). Drawing data from numerous sources, the applicant intends to triangulate “local site contextual data with site-level implementation” (p 42-43). Moreover, the applicant intends to carefully monitor the fidelity of implementation “with an eye toward identifying critical project components that can be replicated and sustained in various conditions” (p 43). Furthermore, the applicant describes how important qualitative data is to be analyzed, for example, data coming from interviews (Appendix H1). Hence, the applicant’s plan persuasively suggests that appropriate data will be collected with respect to the guidance of future replications.

Significantly, one of the applicant’s goals addresses fidelity. The goal has to do with the timely sharing of progress data across the project with key stakeholders for the purposes of both formative feedback and evaluation (p 10, 49). Placing fidelity and formative feedback into the principal goal structure of the proposed project indicates the seriousness with which fidelity, and thus the ability to provide valid and reliable data, is taken by the applicant. Moreover, the applicant provides detailed information on how fidelity is to be measured and scored (for high, medium, and low implementation fidelity, Appendix H5), and subsequently how this information will be fed back as formative feedback for the continuous improvement of the project (Appendix H1). For example, the applicant provides details on the teaching components of the

implementation to be assessed using the Danielson Framework for Teaching, including target values (Appendix H4). Furthermore, the applicant describes how each of the teaching model components are to be with them and for fidelity. The applicant specifically speaks to fidelity indicators, individual thresholds, site thresholds, and the sources of data for assessing fidelity (Appendix H5). The applicant describes cycles of coaching, observation and feedback to stakeholders for formative purposes (p 49). The details are important because they create confidence that the proposed treatment can be implemented with fidelity.

The applicant provides evidence that the proposed performance data will be valid and reliable. For example, in terms of student achievement state standardized assessments are to be used (p 45). Furthermore, to allow comparisons across the multiple sites of the project the applicant proposes to “standardize test scores at each grade level at each site and conduct analysis combining all sites and all eligible tested grades in elementary and middle schools, while adjusting for grade-level effects” (p 46, Appendix H3).

Furthermore, the proposal is for a multisite implementation involving different schools and students. This will afford the applicant the opportunity to examine “the potential differential impact of NTC’s IC program on different students and schools” and thus provide information on median factors for meeting acceptable thresholds of impact (p 47). The impact of these factors will be addressed using hierarchical models of analysis involving student outcomes and various moderating factors (p 47). The applicant refers to investigating mediation factors in terms of “treatment-on-the-treated” effects (p 40) involving teacher practice outcomes and the relationship between intentional coaching and student outcomes (p 40). For example, this analysis will examine the impact of the program on teachers who receive “high-fidelity coaching”, the components such as contact time relating to teacher and student outcomes, and cost-effectiveness. The applicant’s approach for assessing the impact of the treatment as mediated by various factors is both detailed and sophisticated. The presentation is persuasive.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not appear to draw on previous studies for evidence that they are capable of controlling attrition or can explain how in the past they have controlled for attrition. A stronger proposal would have buttressed claims about handling attrition in the current postal by citing previous successes with handling attrition issues.

The information on the selection of teachers for observation requires greater clarity. The applicant first says that a random sample of teachers in grades and subjects targeted for coaching under the NTC IC model will be observed (p 47). In the same paragraph the applicant adds that a random sample of 450 teachers of “tested ELA, math, and science classes” are to be observed. Finally, again in the same paragraph, the applicant refers to “observing all tested ELA, math, and science teachers.” The applicant needs to clarify the first statement on the random sampling of teachers with the second statement that specifies teachers of tested classes. Then, the applicant needs to clarify how these two statements on random selection relates to the later statement on observing all tested teachers.

Reader's Score: 17

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 05/22/2019 03:46 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/22/2019 06:45 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: New Teacher Center (U411A190003)

Reader #4: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	10	9
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	25
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	20	18
Adequacy of Resources/Quality of Management Plan		
1. Resources/Management Plan	25	25
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	0
Sub Total	100	77
Total	100	77

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - EIR Expansion - 1: 84.411A

Reader #4: *****

Applicant: New Teacher Center (U411A190003)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The national significance of the proposed project.

(2) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates there is unmet demand for the process, product, strategy, or practice that will enable the applicant to reach the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

Strengths:

(1) Access to the project findings will have a direct national significance because the information will assist rural and urban schools with instructional coaching teacher development strategies. The project component of [REDACTED]

The project results regarding sustaining instructional coaching is of particular national significance as attrition impacts instructional coaching staff nationwide. (e23) The nation will benefit from the lessons learned about how to build and sustain proficiency in the framework for teaching components. (p. e27)

The findings will be useful to bridge teacher quality and how it directly impacts student success. (p. e27) The planned model has been proven in schools where 66-84% of the students qualify for free and reduced lunches and 77-99% of the students are minorities. These results indicate that this project will have significant national impact because it is built on factors that have worked with the target population in the past. (p. e29)

(2) The demand for teaching excellence is important for all schools, but vital for struggling schools and those with highest need students. The applicant makes a strong case for their project helping to overcome the divergence in staff preparation and student achievement in urban versus rural schools. (p. e28)

The applicant makes the case that professional development, by-and-large, does not meet the needs of the participants. This project could assist development of evidenced-based teacher development and a systemized instructional coaching framework for all teachers. (p. 5 e30) The applicant plans to develop effective codified instructional coaching key components that can be scaled into a national teacher development strategy. (p. 6 e31)

Weaknesses:

(1) No weaknesses noted.

(2) This section could benefit for more detail to fully flush out the unmet need. While the applicant mentions some demands such as poor test scores and teachers who desire more civics training, more specifics would strengthen the application regarding the unmet demand and in their planned processes that will clearly enable them to reach the proposed level of scale. (p. 5-6 e30-31)

Reader's Score: 9

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(2) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.

Strengths:

(1) The 5 project goals utilize an useful approach that will address the national student achievement gap by changing how schools structure, resource, and implement instructional coaching to ensure improved student learning. (e23 Abstract)

The objectives and outcomes are clearly specified and measurable. For example, 100% of the stakeholders' meetings will be attended by key site team members. A high attendance standard will ensure consistency in planning, reporting and benchmark observations. School leader learning sessions are to target leadership thinking changes and move the program toward structures and systems that improve services and outcomes for students. (p. e33-34, p. 8-9)

The framework will help identify and select strong coach candidates and provide formative feedback for them. (e34, p.9)
The goals align across the measures and are focused on skill attainment and measures of gain and application of coaching improvements. (p. e35, p.10)

(2) The conceptual framework and research for instructional coaches is provided. It states that every underserved student should receive equitable education from excellent educators who empower them to be the best learners they can be. The program systematically addresses equity to increase instructional effectiveness and accelerate student learning. (p. e36, p. 11)

The five program components included in the application are linked to each other and provide a workable plan of support for K-12 professional development. The components include:

These components were chosen based upon an external research firm's study of-8th grade math that found positive outcomes from them. These are certainly components that would assist every school in improving services for students and creating highly reflective teachers. ((p. e36, p.11, e39, p. 14)

Weaknesses:

(1) No weaknesses noted.

(2) No weaknesses noted.

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

1. The Secretary considers the applicant's strategy to scale the proposed project. In determining the applicant's capacity to scale the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the applicant identifies a specific strategy or strategies that address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project will increase efficiency in the use of time, staff, money, or other resources in order to improve results and increase productivity.

Strengths:

: (1) The project plans to address barriers to implementation such as underutilized coaches, local customization and lack of data through a gradual release process. The applicant identifies a 4 Phase system for this gradual release approach to scale up. Each phase is logical and builds upon what comes before, such as setting the stage with leader buy-in is followed by creation of demonstration sites. Early implementors will create capacity and scale to control sites and to other implementation sites. Once the partner sites are up and running codification and sharing learning will take place. (p. e43, p. 18)

Specifics are provided to help overcome each barrier. For example, customization will be addressed through targeted training that is specific for a few teachers who need it. Coordination and alignment will also be customized to fit each school's needs. The training will vary depending upon the skill set present in the participating teacher, administrators and schools. (p. e44, p 19)

The applicant sets out strategies that address each barrier with sets of activities that will be varied to best serve the people involved.

The focus component areas, such as conditions for success, often need a change in management to create and sustain meaningful systems.

(2) The project will increase efficiency so that sustainability is possible using local site resources. This project is about building internal capacity not using vendors, so sustainability is built into the structure of the project. The project is designed to help districts utilize the resources they have to be more efficient in impacting student learning. (p. e50. p.25)

The project will assist schools to reorganize schedules, staffing and budgets in order to improve student results and increase productivity. The project will also complete a diagnostic regarding current resources, create a prototype for organizing resources and provide guidance for large districts as well as for smaller rural districts. (p. e51-52, p.26-27)

Weaknesses:

(1) Scaling could be more successful if teacher outcomes and staff evaluation results were linked to the civics curriculum. More specifics and details about their planned teacher assessment use would strengthen the application. Inclusion of more ways that administrators could link teacher evaluation to program implementation would encourage expansion of instructional coaching because it would remove or lessen teacher evaluation time from their schedules. (p. e43-50, p. 18-25)

(2) The applicant does not adequately discuss how their program will be scaled to schools that are understaffed and underfunded. There is no separate strategy for bringing on board schools with limited resources such as teacher release time for staff development. More information is needed regarding implementation strategies with limited resource schools. Descriptions of how the project implementation can create more time for teachers and administrators in those circumstances would strengthen the application.

Reader's Score: 18

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources/Quality of Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources and the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources and quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

(2) The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national or regional level (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) working directly, or through partners, during the grant period.

(3) The potential for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing program of the agency or organization at the end of Federal funding.

(4) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

Strengths:

(1) The applicant has experience with program implementation and plans to replicate their successful management strategies. (p. e52, p. 27) The management plan utilizes

[REDACTED]

In addition to the site-specific services, there is [REDACTED]

Other key components of the management plan are [REDACTED]

2) The applicant makes a strong case for their capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the project to scale on a national utilizing their staff over 100 FTE. The applicant provides an operating budget of \$ [REDACTED] and provides the source of their revenue. (p. e59, p. 34)

The applicant provides information that qualifies their Co-Project Director and their Co-Principal Investigators for the tasks of project implementation and oversight. The applicant itemizes the staff in charge of finance and impact analysis. The applicant includes funding from 40 funders and provides letters of support. (p. e60-61, p 35-36)

(3) The applicant provides a plan for the incorporation of the project purposes, activities, or benefits at the end of Federal funding. The applicant speaks to this goal throughout the application and includes sustainability strategies as a primary goal. Using a collaborative process throughout implementation helps participants grasp and take ownership of the project implementation which encourages sustainability and an easy transition into District resource-use. (p. e61-62, p. 36-37)

(4) The costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the project. Embedding costs into District budgets is part of the implementation plan to help assist districts with sustainability and stability. (p. e63-64, p 38-39)

Weaknesses:

(1) No weaknesses noted.

(2) No weaknesses noted.

(3) No weaknesses noted.

(4) No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in this notice).

(2) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes.

(4) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation

Strengths:

NA

Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: **0**

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/22/2019 06:45 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/21/2019 04:19 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: New Teacher Center (U411A190003)

Reader #5: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	10	10
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	25	25
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	20	20
Adequacy of Resources/Quality of Management Plan		
1. Resources/Management Plan	25	22
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	0
Sub Total	100	77
Total	100	77

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - EIR Expansion - 1: 84.411A

Reader #5: *****

Applicant: New Teacher Center (U411A190003)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The national significance of the proposed project.

(2) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates there is unmet demand for the process, product, strategy, or practice that will enable the applicant to reach the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

Strengths:

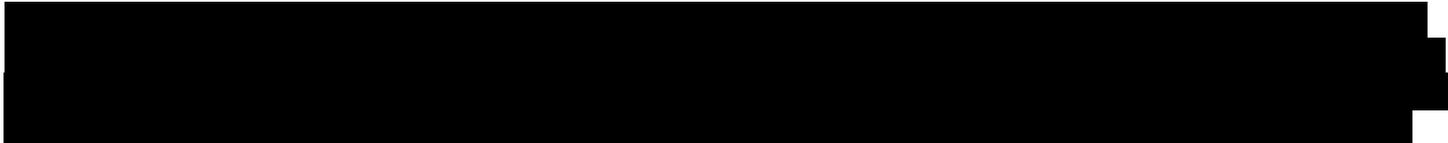
(1) The applicant well describes the national significance of the proposed NTC project. The applicant describes how the NTC project will focus on teacher effectiveness to help narrow the student achievement gap because teacher quality is an important school-based factor to improving student achievement (p. e 27). [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The applicant details findings from an independent i3 validation grant evaluation which show that after 2 years of NTC coaching support, 4th-8th grade students of NTC-supported teachers demonstrated 2-4 months of additional learning in reading and 2-5 months of additional learning in math compared to students of the control group teachers who received traditional coaching support. These results are noteworthy because they were achieved in high-need districts which demonstrates the significance of the proposed NTC project, Further, a key benefit of the proposed IC project is that it provides a cohesive system of support across all levels of a district. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] These key features of the proposed NTC project will provide teachers with skills needed to enhance student success in high needs schools.

(2) The applicant adequately demonstrates that there is an unmet demand for the proposed NTC project which will enable the applicant to reach the level of scale that is proposed in the application. The applicant shows that other districts might want to adopt this program because despite the fact that nationally schools and districts spend [REDACTED] annually on teacher professional development, teachers often receive fragmented professional development which does not address their specific needs (p. e 30). [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] in these large urban districts may want to adopt the NTC IC model which meets WWC standards and includes customizable components that can be seamlessly integrated in small or large schools or districts. A third factor which demonstrates an unmet demand is that often, rural teachers participate in professional development at lower rates due to physical distance from providers (pp. e 30-31). [REDACTED]



The proposed NTC IC model will provide schools and districts with a proven model for implementing a high quality and scalable professional development programs shown to improve instruction and enhance student achievement in a wide variety of communities, including rural and urban areas.

Weaknesses:

- (1) None noted
- (2) None noted

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

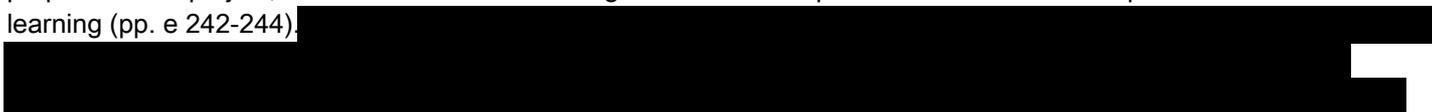
1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.**
- (2) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.**

Strengths:

(1) The applicant presents clearly specified and measurable goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project. For each goal, the applicant specifies key project components; provides clearly linked objectives; provides appropriate performance measures; and details proximal outcomes (pp. e 33-35). This project includes five achievable goals that are aligned to key components within NTC's conceptual framework (p. e 32). To determine the achievability of these goals, the applicant and its partner sites will assess the implementation of the IC program with specific objectives and performance measures. For example, goal 4 is to provide exceptional instructional support for teachers; the key component is teacher development; the objective is to provide ongoing embedded coaching; the performance measure is 80% of teachers receive 180 minutes of support per month; and the proximal outcome is teachers will increase skills related to analyzing student work, planning, and effective and aligned instruction (p. e 35). This example shows that the goals are the distinct purpose that is to be anticipated from the project; and the objectives are the determined steps that will direct full completion of the project goals. The outcomes are designed to improve teacher skills which will enhance student achievement. The objectives and outcomes are consistent with the specific goals of the proposed project.

(2) The applicant presents a cohesive logic model (p. e 66) that provides a feasible framework for the proposed project. The logic model includes key components, inputs, and activities; outputs (coaching); and outcomes (teacher, student). The applicant comprehensively describes key components which provide the conceptual framework underlying the proposed NTC project, as well as research showing evidence of the positive effects of teacher practice and student learning (pp. e 242-244).



efficiency to help sustain the IC model (p. e 51). For example, snapshot data will highlight the need to reorganize school level resources to ensure sufficient time for content teams to engage in collaborative lesson planning and professional learning led by the instructional coach. ERS will create prototypes, which will model new ways of organizing resources at the school level that will support NTC's IC model and will specifically respond to the resource use challenges highlighted in the snapshot diagnostic (p. e 51). These strategies will show specific options for how schools can organize within the resources they have, including changes to the schedule, budget, and staffing, and the proposed options would be scalable system-wide. At the end of this collaborative support, instructional coaches will have clearly defined roles and new sets of expertise; teachers will have access to high quality, job-embedded coaching; and school leaders will have the underlying, sustainable, school design structures in place to utilize IC to its full effect in the delivery of instruction (p. e 52).

Weaknesses:

- (1) None noted
- (2) None noted

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources/Quality of Management Plan

- 1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources and the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources and quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**
 - (1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.**
 - (2) The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to bring the proposed project to scale on a national or regional level (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) working directly, or through partners, during the grant period.**
 - (3) The potential for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing program of the agency or organization at the end of Federal funding.**
 - (4) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.**

Strengths:

- (1) The applicant provides an adequate management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget. The applicant identifies key project staff, including Site Leads, Senior Program Manager, and the Management Council, which is led by the Project Director, and includes the Finance Director, Evaluation Director, Site Leads, Senior Program Manager, and SRI and ERS. The applicant adequately describes their project responsibilities (pp. e 52-55) and provides resumes (Appendix B) which further describe their qualifications and experiences. The applicant provides a realistic year-to-year management timeline, which is organized by objectives; identifies responsible personnel; and includes viable milestones for accomplishing project tasks (pp. e 56-58).
- (2) The applicant adequately describes their capacity in terms of qualified personnel and financial resources to bring the proposed project to scale on a national or regional level working directly, or through partners, during the grant period. For example, NTC's current annual operating budget is [REDACTED], which includes private, federal, and local dollars. Current revenue is derived from approximately 45% percent private philanthropy, 32% federal grants and 23% contracts (p. e 59).

The applicant identifies project personnel and describes their qualifications, experience, and project responsibilities which demonstrate their capacity to manage the proposed NTC project (Appendix B). NTC's partner sites demonstrate commitment to implementation and sustainability of the proposed project as evidenced by letters of support (Appendix C).

(3) The applicant's feasible plans for sustainability at the end of Federal funding will include NTC and its partner sites developing an MOU and an action plan with specific aims supporting each partner site's intention to implement, expand, and sustain their programs (p. e 62). NTC will provide direct technical assistance to partner sites on adapting and implementing the IC model within their own contexts.

(4) The applicant's proposed budget of [REDACTED] includes costs that are reasonable in relation to the objectives because the applicant provides allocations for proposed project activities which support project goals and objectives. For example, the budget includes allowable cost such as training stipends [REDACTED] which support project goals and objectives (p. e 222). A cost saving feature of the budget is the yearly decline in per pupil cost (p. e 63).

Weaknesses:

(1) The time commitments for key personnel may not be not sufficient to ensure their capability and availability to implement planned project components with fidelity. For example, only 20% FTE is allocated for both the Co-Project Director and the Co-Project Director (p. e 225), which may limit their capability and availability in overseeing the strategic implementation of the project; managing the staff implementing the project; leading the Management Council; and having ultimate responsibility and authority over the project (p. e 60). Also, only 65% FTE is allocated for each of the 3 Client Leads who will be responsible for program delivery consultation and providing technical assistance to program leaders and mentors in each of the partner LEAs (p. e 226). Since the Client Leads will be critical to building support, managing, assessing, and launching the project in their respective LEAs, allocating only 65% FTE may limit their capability and availability to guide all aspects of launching the IC model (p. e 53).

(2) The applicant describes receiving support from over 40 funders and philanthropic support from giving foundations, small family foundations, and corporations, which allows NTC to expand its impact, develop new products and services, and build organization infrastructure (p. e 61). The applicant does not clearly explain who these partners are and how they will support the proposed project.

(3). None noted

(4) None noted

Reader's Score: 22

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in

this notice).

(2) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes.

(4) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 05/21/2019 04:19 PM